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Letter dated 6 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to my letter to the President of the Security Council dated 19 June 2018 (S/2018/618), transmitting a letter from Reem Al Hashimy, Cabinet member and Minister of State for International Cooperation. Upon instructions from my Government, I am pleased to transmit herewith an update from Ms. Al Hashimy regarding the humanitarian situation in Hudaydah, Yemen (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Lana **Nusseibeh**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 6 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

6 July 2018

Further to my letter dated 19 June 2018 (S/2018/618), on behalf of my Government, I am writing to provide an update on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, in particular in Hudaydah. I would also like to share further details on the contingency plan I had referred to in that letter for a humanitarian response by the Arab Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen (the Coalition).

At the outset, let me reaffirm the Coalition's commitment to international humanitarian law and its humanitarian commitment to the people of Yemen, regardless of their location and affiliation.

The Coalition is acutely aware of the scale and gravity of the humanitarian crisis that Yemen faces. The situation in Hudaydah must be considered in the context of the broader humanitarian situation in Yemen, as Hudaydah and its port form a critical part of the country's humanitarian infrastructure. Yemen's already challenging development situation rapidly deteriorated when, nearly four years ago, Houthi militias began attacking and taking over large swaths of the country. The State institutions they seized were rendered incapable of delivering basic services, and members of the Houthi militias have enriched themselves by profiteering in the range of billions of dollars from the sale of black market fuel and the imposition of illegal taxation mechanisms and by monopolizing key sectors of the economy at the expense of Yemen's private sector and civilians, many of whom have closed their businesses and left the country.

The United Nations and other partners have worked tirelessly to foster a viable plan for peace and political transition, inclusive of the Houthis and compliant with Security Council resolution 2216 (2015). Progress, however, has been marginal to date. There is a consistent pattern of the Houthis agreeing to terms in support of the peace process and then reneging. Concurrently, the Houthis continue to fire ballistic missiles into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (more than 150 so far), threatening the lives of civilians and undermining the prospects for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Their practice of laying vast numbers of landmines and improvised explosive devices will be a deadly legacy for decades to come — analysts estimate that the Houthis have turned Yemen into the most heavily mined country in the Middle East and North Africa. They also continue their well-documented recruitment and use of children on the battlefield, with devastating short- and long-term impacts. Moreover, they continue to refuse to make commitments to international humanitarian law and international law, instead, in public speeches as recently as two weeks ago, promising a scorched-earth approach to Hudaydah. There are also a worrying number of reports from the United Nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Coalition monitors on the ground in Hudaydah about Houthi actions against key infrastructure and civilian safety that are already having an impact and threatening to intensify humanitarian risks. Some of these reported actions constitute prima facie violations of the Houthis' obligations under international humanitarian law. Of particular note, the Houthis have been documented indiscriminately placing landmines and improvised explosive devices in and around Hudaydah. The Houthis are also positioning combatants, heavy weapons and snipers in residential areas and schools and opening fire from these locations. The United Nations has reported that the Houthis have dug trenches in Hudaydah, damaging water and sanitation systems, which increases the risk of an outbreak of cholera. Troublingly, some civilians are also reporting Houthi interference in their efforts to leave areas controlled by Houthi

militias. Last week, Houthi militias raided a World Food Programme (WFP) warehouse and detained two WFP workers. These actions clearly imperil the lives of civilians and demonstrate a contumelious disregard for international law. The Coalition has carefully calibrated its operation to liberate Hudaydah to account for this complex humanitarian setting, avoid civilian impacts and preserve and protect vital humanitarian infrastructure, including Hudaydah port.

The Coalition reiterates its continued support for the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Martin Griffiths. Accordingly, the Coalition has consistently given the Special Envoy time to reach a political solution. That said, and given the recent evidence of the Houthis' behaviour in Hudaydah, the Coalition is concerned that the Houthis perceive a link between leverage in political negotiations and a worsening of the humanitarian and civilian safety situation. The Houthis have made no assurances, either about the preservation of the port or about any intention on their part to uphold international humanitarian law and civilian safety. Accordingly, it is critical that the international community condemn Houthi violations in the clearest and strongest terms. Pressure by the Security Council in this regard would significantly reduce the possibility of Houthi misinterpretation that there will be political rewards from using the humanitarian situation as a bargaining chip.

The humanitarian contingency plan

The Coalition has developed a multifaceted humanitarian contingency plan, which is already being implemented, for relief in both Hudaydah and the broader country, in full coordination with the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Yemen and with designated United Nations agencies and international NGOs. The Coalition's humanitarian response is premised upon a wide range of scenarios, including Houthi destruction of humanitarian infrastructure and civilian displacement. This humanitarian response plan is not proposed by the Coalition as a panacea: the humanitarian situation in Yemen cannot be reversed within a matter of days or weeks. However, it has been carefully designed to provide for the humanitarian needs of the greatest possible number of civilians, minimize the risks to health and safety and mitigate the suffering of the Yemeni people.

Further to the details provided in my above-mentioned letter (S/2018/618), the seven key elements of the humanitarian contingency plan are as follows:

1. Food and nutrition

- The United Arab Emirates will provide emergency food assistance to people in Hudaydah and neighbouring governorates, in coordination with the international community, including international NGOs and United Nations agencies.
- United Nations agencies continue to stockpile a buffer of around 100,000 metric tons of food in and around Hudaydah. WFP estimates that this is sufficient to feed over 6 million people for a period of one month. An additional 54,000 emergency food kits, each feeding a family of seven for one week, are also stockpiled. WFP is engaged in a major effort to distribute food to Hudaydah residents.
- The ports of Hudaydah and Salif remain open, pursuant to Coalition commitment, with a robust queue of supplies for unloading. As at 3 July 2018, five ships were being unloaded in Hudaydah, six were waiting to be unloaded and one was being unloaded in the port of Salif.
- The United Arab Emirates has committed an additional 35,000 metric tons of food and supplies to be delivered by 10 ships, supplemented by 100 trucks

(47 with food, 53 with other supplies) that are currently making deliveries between Khawkhah and Mukha'. To date, Emirates Red Crescent has already provided 9,900 food baskets, benefiting more than 69,300 people in 11 areas (Khawkhah, Wa'rah, Mushaj, Wadi Arafan, Maraqin, Tahtiyah, Matinah, Quwirq, Buqa', Shuqayf and Thaykar).

- There are also 14,000 food baskets pre-positioned for delivery by air, once facilities have been demined and secured. Each food basket is designed for a family of seven persons for one month.

- Additional planning measures are also under way to build food-specific warehousing in additional locations and reinforce roads for heavy-duty transport vehicles and general safety, including demining. Additional trucks will also be allocated for distribution.

- Concurrent with the humanitarian operation, there is a focus on early recovery to supplement food supplies and livelihoods. For instance, the fishermen's wharf in Khawkhah is being repaired and reopened.

2. Health

- There are 3 main hospitals and 19 health centres in Hudaydah, which are being reinforced with new, pre-positioned medical supplies, such as trauma kits, as well as with training and capacity development. The Coalition is coordinating with the United Nations to address current reports that some health centres are reducing services as staff leave.

- Two surgical unit teams are pre-positioned for emergency needs.

- A referral system for emergency cases is in place for civilian hospitals in Aden.

- The Coalition is aware that a fully fledged vaccination programme is currently being planned, and it is strongly supporting efforts to ensure that the re-emergence of cholera is averted at all costs.

- Additional planning measures are also under way to provide medical supplies via air bridge and to ensure adequate fuel supply to medical facilities, including for the cold-chain.

3. Shelter

- The Coalition and its United Nations and NGO partners have pre-positioned significant volumes of emergency shelter kits and non-food items, covering roughly 50,000 persons. In the first two weeks, the United Nations reported approximately 35,000 displaced persons. Additional supplies for further civilian movement subsequently arrived.

- As the number reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs this week is growing, we are strengthening our focus on shelter imports. We are working closely with the Office and the figures they have, to address the needs.

- The Coalition continues to work closely with the United Nations to identify sites for displaced persons and a chain of safe passage, including registration.

4. Water and sanitation

- The United Nations reports that repairs have been made to reverse Houthi damage to water supplies, but the United Nations and the Coalition continue to monitor cholera risks closely. The United Arab Emirates will provide additional

emergency water and sanitation assistance to people in Hudaydah and neighbouring governorates, in coordination with the United Nations and NGOs.

- To respond to Houthi militia disruptions of water supplies, additional Coalition planning measures are under way to upgrade existing water and sanitation systems, including fuel supply, and to establish a trucking system to provide additional water supply. Chlorine tablets, latrines and washing stations are also being prepared for both temporary sites and public buildings.

5. Fuel

- Fuel needs in the Hudaydah area include mazut (a heavy fuel oil) and diesel. Critical uses include water pumping and treatment for sanitation, hospitals and wheat mills, requiring at least 12 million gallons of mazut and 500,000 gallons of diesel per month. The United Nations and NGO partners accordingly have pre-positioned fuel supplies at many key sites.

- While storage and ships currently in Hudaydah port are estimated to have supplies to cover critical uses, fuel continues to be an essential component for humanitarian infrastructure, and it is the Coalition's commitment to ensure that a steady supply of fuel continues to reach Hudaydah, especially for hospital and sanitation pump usage. Additional fuel supplies and mobile tanks will also be brought by sea and by road from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

6. Port restoration and alternatives

- Given the critical nature of Hudaydah port, the Coalition has pre-positioned port construction and logistics teams and equipment to repair any Houthi damage to Hudaydah port, as well as expand capacity. Equipment includes cranes, tug boats, diesel tankers and other items.

- To enable aid flows through other ports in the event of Houthi damage to Hudaydah, import facilities are in place at Aden, Mukalla and Mukha' in Yemen and Jazan port in Saudi Arabia. Indicatively, following the liberation of Aden port by the Coalition, food imports have increased by 82 per cent. From those ports, supplies would be largely transported by land, supplemented by air service.

- Access through Hudaydah airport, once security clearance has been given, will provide an additional import route.

- Demining activities are under way at the airport and ready to be commenced at the port.

7. Deconfliction

- The Coalition remains committed to the safety of civilians and humanitarian workers through deconfliction practices. Updates to the no-strike list maintained by the Evacuation and Humanitarian Operations Cell are being continually being made by the United Nations and other actors, notably including recent additions of further water system sites.

- The Coalition also remains committed to working with the United Nations to investigate any alleged damages from Coalition activities, such as the report on 17 June 2018 of damage to the windshield of an unoccupied WFP vehicle.

The United Arab Emirates reaffirms that the United Nations and humanitarian agencies have an essential role to play in ensuring the welfare of the residents of Hudaydah and reiterates its commitment to continuing close coordination with humanitarian entities. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has

separately reported positive progress in the implementation of the Yemen humanitarian response plan, to which the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia contributed an unearmarked and unrestricted $930 million in March 2018.

We are establishing a civil-military operations centre in the Hudaydah area that will be staffed within a week, to further facilitate humanitarian coordination with humanitarian agencies on the ground. We take this opportunity to reiterate our gratitude for the extraordinary coordination work of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, with whom we are in constant dialogue.

The United Arab Emirates continues to share the deep concern of the members of the Security Council for the well-being of the people of Hudaydah and those who are supplied by its port.

(*Signed*) Reem **Al Hashimy**
Minister of State for International Cooperation